



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

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9 July 2015

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Chief Finance Officers of English Billing Authorities

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE BUSINESS RATES SECTION

Dear Chief Finance Officer

Business Rates Information Letter (6/2015): Business Rates Budget Measures

This is the sixth business rates information letter to be issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government this year. Previous letters are available on the internet at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/business-rates-information-letters>

or for archived letters:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/http://www.communities.gov.uk/localgovernment/localgovernmentfinance/businessrates/busratesinformationletters/>.

- **Business Rates Administration Review – Update**
- **Business Rates Avoidance - Update**
- **Local Newspapers**

Business Rates Administration Review - Update

1. The Government published on 8 July an update on the action it is taking to improve the administration of business rates and a summary of responses to the interim findings. We are grateful for the support of practitioners in this work. The update sets out the progress the Government has made in developing a more efficient appeals system, better sharing of information, and

simpler billing and collection. The Government has committed to making these practical improvements to the business rates system by 2017. This update can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/administration-of-business-rates-in-england-interim-findings>.

Business Rates Avoidance: Discussion Paper – Update

2. The Government also published an update on tackling business rates avoidance including a summary of stakeholder responses. The development of anti-avoidance measures will be announced in due course. This update can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/business-rates-avoidance-discussion-paper>.

3. Once again, we would like to thank practitioners for their help in this work.

Local Newspapers

4. The Government committed in the March Budget and its Manifesto to consult on the introduction of a business rates relief for local newspapers. The purpose of any relief would be to support local newspapers as they adapt to new technology and changing circumstances.

5. On 8 July the Government published a consultation paper which gives local newspapers the opportunity to make the case for a business rates relief. The consultation document can be found on the gov.uk website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-case-for-a-business-rates-relief-for-local-newspapers>

6. We would welcome responses to the issues and questions raised in the consultation paper.